

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1-12 were pending in this application. Claim 12 has been cancelled, and claims 1, 8 and 11 have been amended hereby. Accordingly, claims 1-11 will be pending herein upon entry of this Amendment. For the reasons stated below, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in this application are in condition for allowance. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claim 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,247,493 to Brown, and claims 1-7 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,023,422 to Tanigushi et al. in view of Brown. These grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

According to amended claim 1, a method is provided for making a lens array which comprises the steps of: forming a resin-molded piece which includes a plurality of lenses each having a convex lens surface, and a holder portion for holding the plurality of lenses; applying a coating to the holder portion so as to surround said each lens surface at a predetermined spacing from an outer periphery of the lens surface; melting the applied coating for causing the melted coating to spread onto the outer periphery of the lens surface; and solidifying the melted coating. Note that emphasis is added by underlining.

The underlined features are simply found in Figs. 8-11 taken with a corresponding description from paragraph 0057 to paragraph 0059 (pages 10 and 11) of the specification. Due

to these features, even if the coating is inaccurately deposited relative to the lens surface at the time of initial deposition, the position is finally corrected by subsequent melting of the coating, as described in paragraph 0061.

The same discussion also applies to claim 8 which has been similarly amended.

In US Patent No. 4,247,493 to Brown, a protective film is first formed over the convex surface of a lens, and a low melting point alloy block is then molded onto the coated surface to form a holder for the lens (column 4, lines 13-30). Thus, this document clearly fails to teach or suggest forming a coating (or black material) at a spacing from an outer periphery of the lens.

US Patent No. 5,023,442 to Tanigushi et al. is cited only to show the basic structure of a lens array. However, as already noted by the Examiner, this document clearly fails to teach or suggest even formation of a coating, let alone the claimed features pointed out above.

Claim 11 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 12, which was indicated as being allowable. Thus, amended claim 11 should be allowable at least for the same reasons as original claim 12 was deemed allowable.

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In view of the foregoing all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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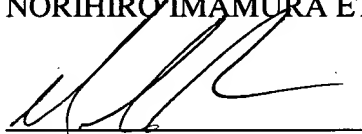
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Respectfully submitted,

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